UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

PROVISIONAL

E/1998/SR.45
30 June 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Substantive session for 1998

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 45th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 29 July 1998, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. OLHAYE (Djibouti)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (E/1998/8, E/1998/43 and Corr.1, E/1998/72 and Add.1)

Ms. KELLEY (Secretary of the Council) read out corrections to the English text of document E/1998/72: in paragraph 35, the figure "71" should be replaced by the figure "70" and in the fourth line of paragraph 58, the word "their" should be amended to "each". Turning to the annex to document E/1997/72/Add.1, she announced that the phrase "21-25 September or" should be deleted.

Ms. CLIFFORD (United States of America) said that her delegation disassociated itself from the decision of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations to recommend special consultative status for the Unión de Escritores Y Artistas de Cuba and the Organization for the Solidarity of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America (OSPAAL) because it was not convinced that those organizations were independent entities.

Mr. HAMDAN (Lebanon) said that his delegation dissociated itself from the Committee's recommendation of consultative status for EcoPeace-Middle East Environment NGO Forum. The delegation of Lebanon had been absent when the Committee had granted consultative status, and had subsequently discovered that some of the information EcoPeace had submitted was unfounded or questionable. The delegation of Lebanon would ask for EcoPeace's status to be reconsidered at the next meeting of the Committee.

Mr. REYES-RODRÍGUEZ (Cuba) expressed his delegation's dismay that the Council's subsidiary organs were still being manipulated on grounds of bilateral political considerations. He wished it made clear in the relevant report that only one delegation had voted against the recommendation to grant special consultative status to the Unión de Escritores Y Artistas de Cuba and the Organization for the Solidarity of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America (OSPAAL). He urged countries to refrain in future from introducing issues that were unrelated to the technical work of the Council's subsidiary organs.

Mr. BHATTI (Pakistan) said that his delegation wished to dissociate

itself from the consensus on granting general consultative status to the International Institute for Non-Aligned Studies.

Ms. CASTRO DE BARISH (Observer for Costa Rica) said that her delegation wished to dissociate itself from the consensus on granting consultative status to Eagle Forum. In her delegation's opinion, the aims and purposes of that organization were not in conformity with the spirit, purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and therefore did not meet the criteria set out in paragraph 2 of Council resolution 1996/31. Nor were they in keeping with the purposes and principles of other United Nations system organizations, specifically the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Her delegation believed that with the prestige and credibility of the United Nations at stake, it could not support a viewpoint that ran counter to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to the aims of the United Nation system in general and UNICEF and the Third Committee in particular that ratification of that Convention should be universal.

Her delegation would not oppose the consensus by a negative vote. The Committee must assume responsibility for its decision to recommend consultative status for Eagle Forum, but Costa Rica would maintain its reservation.

Ms. LUBIN (International Federation of Settlements and Neighbourhood Centre (IFSNC)) expressed gratitude for the recommendation to reclassify her organization to the category of general consultative status.

She noted that the work of accreditation had proceeded more swiftly than in previous years, but believed that the credentials of applicant organizations should be examined in greater detail: although the problems some delegations had with some organizations appeared to be mainly political, some of those problems might be the result of inadequate scrutiny of credentials.

She said that the Committee appeared not to have the time to read and digest the reports that non-governmental organizations spent much time and effort writing. She suggested therefore that an inter-sessional subcommittee or other mechanism should be set up to deal with incoming reports.

Recommendations contained in the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its resumed 1997 session (E/1998/8)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take action on proposed draft decisions I to IV, which had been adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Draft decisions I to IV were adopted.

Recommendations contained in the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on the first part of its 1998 session (E/1998/72)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take action on proposed draft decisions I to III, which had been adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Mr. ARDA (Turkey), speaking in explanation of position on draft decision I, said that his delegation was not part of the consensus because it had serious doubts whether the aims and purposes of the Armenian Relief Society met the criteria set forth in paragraph 2 of Council resolution 1996/31.

The Turkish delegation had submitted to the Committee official publications of the central executive of the Armenian Relief Society, which was based in the United States. Those publications promoted hatred and violence based on ethnicity and religious belief and showed that the Society's aim was the dismemberment of Turkey by force. The Society openly boasted that it had a camp where its instructors promoted terrorism by methods such as re-enacting the attack on the Turkish Embassy in Lisbon in 1983, in which the wife of the Ambassador was murdered by terrorists while trying to save her children. Nor had the Turkish delegation been satisfied with the answers given by the representative of the Society to its questions.

The Turkish delegation believed that the Committee had made a serious mistake in recommending Roster status for the Society and urged other delegations also to watch the Society's every move.

He requested that his explanation of position should be reflected in the Council's report on the current session.

Draft decision I was adopted.

Ms. AGHADJANIAN (Observer for Armenia) said that it had been obvious in the deliberations of the Committee that members had no major concerns about the activities or nature of the Armenian Relief Society, which had appeared to be in full compliance with the established criteria.

Mr. ARDA (Turkey), speaking on a point of order, objected that the Observer for Armenia had been speaking while Council was in the process of voting and that Council members alone had the right to express their positions or votes either before or after action had been taken.

Ms. AGHADJANIAN (Observer for Armenia) said that the Committee had thoroughly studied the application from the Armenian Relief Society, the documentation provided by the Turkish delegation and the answers provided by the

representative of the Society. Also, the decision to recommend granting the Society Roster status had been taken without a vote.

The activities of the Society were purely humanitarian and the false allegations of links with terrorism or terrorist groups were nothing more than attempts to distract the Council.

Draft decisions II and III were adopted.

Recommendations contained in the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on the second part of its 1998 session (E/1998/72/Add.1)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take action on proposed draft decisions I and II, which had been adopted by the Committee without a vote. He drew attention to the programme budget implications of draft decision II as reflected in the annex to the report.

Draft decisions I and II were adopted.

The PRESIDENT proposed that the Council should take note of reports E/1998/8, reports E/1998/72 and Add.1 as orally revised, and reports E/1998/43 and Corr.1.

It was so decided.

COORDINATION, PROGRAMME AND OTHER QUESTIONS (continued)

Draft resolution E/1998/L.25 and Corr.1

Mr. CHOWDHURY (Bangladesh) announced that Azerbaijan, Benin, the Central African Republic, Djibouti, the Gambia, Mongolia, Spain, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Viet Nam should be added to the list of sponsors given in document E/1998/L.25/Corr.1.

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take action on the proposed draft resolution entitled "International Year of Microcredit, 2005", which had no programme budget implications.

The draft resolution, as orally revised, was adopted.

COORDINATION, PROGRAMME AND OTHER QUESTIONS:

(d) INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF INFORMATICS

Draft resolution E/1998/L.16

The PRESIDENT informed the Council that the draft resolution before it, entitled "The need to harmonize and improve United Nations informatics systems for optimal utilization and accessibility by all States", had been submitted on the basis of informal consultations and had no programme budget implications.

The draft resolution was adopted.

COORDINATION, PROGRAMME AND OTHER QUESTIONS:

(e) PROCLAMATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF MOUNTAINS

Draft resolution E/1998/L.21

The PRESIDENT announced that New Zealand and Portugal should be added to the list of sponsors of the draft resolution entitled "Proclamation of an international year of mountains", and informed the Council that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

Ms. ESHMAMBETOVA (Observer for Kyrgyzstan), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, called on the Council to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

The draft resolution, as orally revised, was adopted.

Ms. KEPPLER-SCHLESINGER (Observer for Austria), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that under the relevant resolutions of the Council and of the General Assembly, the proclamation of an international year or other anniversary should add value and have the potential to raise public awareness on a subject of major international concern. There should also be clarity about the what contribution the United Nations was called upon to make.

With the streamlining of the Council's agenda, the General Assembly would from 1999 be handling proposals for international years and other anniversaries directly. The European Union understood that the same guidelines would still apply.

COORDINATION, PROGRAMME AND OTHER QUESTIONS:

(f) INTERNATIONAL YEAR FOR THE CULTURE OF PEACE, 2000

Draft resolution E/1998/L.14/Rev.1

The PRESIDENT announced that Angola, Benin, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Dominican Republic, Malawi, Nepal, Thailand, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uruguay had joined the sponsors of draft resolution E/1998/L.14/Rev.1 on the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010). The draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

Ms. KEPPLER-SCHLESINGER (Observer for Austria), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that while the Union supported the promotion of a culture of peace, it was not convinced that the decade being proposed would be the most effective way to achieve that goal.

During the consultations on the draft resolution, the Union had raised the

question whether the draft was in line with the Council's guidelines on the proclamation of international years and decades. It appeared that a new concept of "a culture of peace and non-violence" was being introduced even though the Council had not yet completed its consideration of the concept of "a culture of peace". The Union considered the addition to be unnecessary, since "non-violence" as one of the possible means to achieve peace was already included in the concept of "a culture of peace" and its inclusion in the title on the same footing as "a culture of peace" could interfere with the broader concept. Those concerns notwithstanding, the Union would join in the consensus on the text.

Draft resolution E/1998/L.14/Rev.1 was adopted.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REPERCUSSIONS OF THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION ON THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY, INCLUDING JERUSALEM, AND THE ARAB POPULATION IN THE OCCUPIED SYRIAN GOLAN (continued) (E/1998/L.26)

Draft resolution E/1998/L.26

The PRESIDENT announced that Colombia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Morocco and Oman had joined the sponsors of draft resolution E/1998/L.26 on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan. A recorded vote had been requested on the draft resolution, which had no programme budget implications.

Mr. SOUTHWICK (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that the United States Government would continue to oppose references in resolutions which stated or implied Arab or Palestinian sovereignty over Jerusalem and territories that were the subject of direct negotiations between the parties to the conflict. Such references had no effect whatsoever on issues of sovereignty and inappropriately prejudged the permanent political arrangements that could be determined only through the direct negotiations to which the parties had committed themselves.

His delegation agreed with the substance of paragraph 6, which stressed the importance of the work of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations, and of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the occupied Territories. That work had been instrumental in advancing the economic and developmental goals of the peace process.

With reference to paragraph 7, the United States and many others had made

strong efforts to encourage foreign investment in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and it endorsed the sense of the paragraph that private foreign investment was essential to improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people.

His delegation regretted that, despite those positive elements, the resolution contained unacceptable language. The Council should be taking actions to encourage direct exchanges between the parties, which were essential to move the peace process forward, rather than undermining them. To be of genuine assistance to the Middle East peace process, the Council must look forward, not backward, and dedicate itself to supporting the work of the negotiating parties. On both of those counts, the draft resolution failed and the United States would therefore vote against it.

At the request of the representative of the United States of America, a recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Djibouti, El Salvador, Finland, France, Germany, Guyana, Iceland, India, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Latvia, Lebanon, Mauritius, Mexico, Mozambique, New Zealand, Oman, Pakistan, Poland, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom, viet Nam.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: None.

Draft resolution E/1998/L.26 was adopted by 44 votes to 1.

Mr. PANKIN (Russian Federation), speaking in explanation of vote after the vote, said that the Russian Federation shared the grave concern expressed in the resolution about the deterioration of economic and living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory. It was also concerned about the lack of progress in the peace process, since a solution to the problems described in the resolution was possible only through implementation of the agreements which the parties had reached.

The PRESIDENT proposed that the Council should take note of the note of the Secretary-General transmitting the report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) entitled "Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the

Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan", which was contained in document A/53/163-E/1998/79.

It was so decided.

ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS (continued) (E/1998/L.33)

Draft decision E/1998/L.33

Mr. CHOMAR (Mozambique), speaking on behalf of the African States, introduced draft decision E/1998/L.33 on the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. He said that the report highlighted the causes of conflict in Africa and the linkage between durable peace and sustainable development. He therefore recommended the draft decision for adoption by the Council.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.